

**Corrected Drawings:**

Please substitute the enclosed drawings for the drawings currently on file

**REMARKS**

Applicant respectfully requests consideration and entry of the present amendment responsive to the Office Action of July 2, 2003. The instant amendment is respectfully believed to place the application into condition for allowance.

Claims 1-11, 13-16, 18-25 and 27-29, 31-39 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) from Bunin et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,907,651 in view of Yanagawa et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,297,228. In addition, claims 12 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) from Bunin and Yangawa in view of Applicants Admitted Prior Art (AAPA).

Each of the independent claims (claims 1, 21 and 33) is amended to specify that the substrate module is manually replaceable or removably replaceable. Support for the claim amendments may be found on page 13, lines 10-20 of Applicant's specification.

In contrast, as mentioned by the Examiner on page 4, par. 2, "Bunin does not disclose a substrate, which contains no fibers and no grooves for receiving fibers, that serves as an intermediary between the two connector modules." Furthermore, Yanagawa also does not teach, suggest or imply a substrate that is manually replaceable or removably replaceable. In fact, Yanagawa teaches away from such disclosure. In particular, the Examiner's attention is kindly directed to col. 5, lines 12-16 of the Yanagawa patent, which states in part, that "the central chip (waveguide chip) b2 and the fiber aligning jigs b1 and b3 are **bonded** at their butted end faces by an optical **adhesive**" (emphasis added).

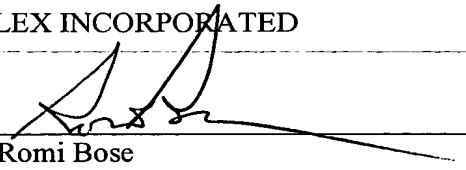
Accordingly, it can be seen, that by bonding the waveguide chip to the jigs, the chip is no longer removable or replaceable, since the entire assembly would then have to be removed and discarded.

In light of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. This application is believed to be in condition for allowance upon entry of the presently amended claims.

Respectfully submitted,

MOLEX INCORPORATED

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By:   
Romi Bose  
Registration No.: 43,322  
Attorney of Record

Mailing Address:  
Romi Bose  
MOLEX INCORPORATED  
2222 Wellington Court  
Lisle, Illinois 60532  
Tel.: (630) 527-4419  
Fax: (630) 416-4962